

The Leading Edge

MSgt Baker's nomination highlighted two examples of his deeply caring style of leadership, which made a long-lasting and positive impression on this airman years ago.

First, the young airman and his wife were unable to get housing when they arrived at their first duty station. He relayed this information to his NCOIC, then SSgt Baker, who immediately drove him over to the housing office. SSgt Baker successfully advocated the airman's case and in a few days the airman's family was in base housing. The airman looked at SSgt Baker's four stripes and wondered what power and influence this Staff Sergeant must have.

A year later the airman's wife was pregnant with their first child. As is typical, she went to the hospital for some blood work. The lab technician reminded her that she should have been fasting 12 hours prior to the appointment. The airman's wife had not fasted. She explained that no one had instructed her to do so. The technician became upset and screamed at her, bringing her to tears. After hearing his wife's story, the airman informed his NCOIC. Later that same day the airman and his wife received a call at home from the hospital commander, who apologized for the incident.

The young airman, now a Staff Sergeant, summarized the impact of MSgt Baker's leadership on him like this...

I know the above examples may seem trivial and not that important, but when you're brand new to the military, recently married, and know jack squat about how the Air Force works it was like having a guardian angel. I learned more in two years working for him than the rest of my time working with other individuals in the career field. I believe one of the most important things we can do for our career field is to take care of the people we supervise and their families. That's what my first NCOIC did for me and that's what I will try and do for others as long as I'm in the Air Force.